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S o l i c i t a t i o n

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EVALUATING TASK FORCES, TOLL-FREE INFORMATION SERVICE LINES, AND DRUG TESTING PROGRAMS

BJA/NIJ EVALUATION PARTNERSHIP FOR THE EDWARD BYRNE MEMORIAL STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM 1998

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
OCTOBER 31, 1998

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Evaluating Task Forces, Toll-Free Information Service Lines, and Drug Testing Programs:

BJA/NIJ Evaluation Partnership for the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program 1998

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) have jointly provided financial and administrative support for the evaluation of the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program (the Byrne Program), as authorized by the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988, 42U.S.C.3766 (a)(2), as amended. Since FY 1989, NIJ, as the research arm of the United States Department of Justice (USDOJ), has conducted comprehensive evaluations of BJA programs, promulgated evaluation guidelines and disseminated evaluation findings. This solicitation is a part of the BJA/NIJ Evaluation Partnership for 1998. This solicitation seeks applications for evaluation of three activities funded under the Byrne Program.

I. MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL TASK FORCES

A. Introduction and Background

In the mid 1980's increasing levels of drug trafficking and drug related crimes, especially violent crimes, presented local law enforcement with a problem often too complex to be solved by a single agency or traditional policing approaches. The Federal response to the illegal substance epidemic was the enactment of the Anti-Drug Abuse Acts by the U.S. Congress in 1986 and 1988. Most States used a significant portion of the funding assistance, available through BJA, USDOJ, to create multi-jurisdictional task forces or to enhance those already in existence. Between 800 and 1000 multi-jurisdictional task forces (MJTFs) are now operational in 56 states and territories in the United States. At the time, though these cooperative strategies were not altogether new as a law enforcement tool, their exponential growth as a mechanism to confront the problem of illegal drug use was dramatic.

The MJTF structure promotes an improved response to drug trafficking and drug related crimes by

facilitating the integration of previously fragmented police services. MJTFs allow single, local police agencies to pool resources with other police agencies, and to work more effectively with Federal agencies and other components of the criminal justice systems. MJTFs reduce the limitations imposed by jurisdictional boundaries and increase information sharing to facilitate comprehensive investigations, arrests, and prosecutions without interfering with other field operations.

Structural formats of MJTFs vary widely. They may be limited to law enforcement agencies across jurisdictions or include law enforcement agencies at different levels of government within the same jurisdiction. They may incorporate other criminal justice agencies, such as prosecutors' offices within and across jurisdictions, or they may involve other non-criminal justice agencies or private groups such as welfare agencies or treatment programs. MJTF objectives may vary and target such problems as drugs, gangs, or white collar crime. They also may vary as to the level of operations, e.g., street level, mid-level, or multinational organized crime level.

Yet, in spite of their growth and the substantial funding for them, little is known about the impact of such strategies. Even more importantly, the most appropriate methodologies for effectively evaluating these complex task forces has not been determined. Currently, criminal justice state planning agencies are experimenting broadly in ways to assess and evaluate MJTFs supported through Byrne state-wide strategies. Systematic research is still needed to develop, implement and assess suitable measurement technologies to determine impact. Early research on MJTFs consisted primarily of process evaluations. And while confidence in the MJTF process continues to be expressed by practitioners, researchers, and policy makers, adequate information on the impact of MJTFs and methodologies to obtain this information has not been fully developed.

The purpose of this solicitation is to encourage research proposals that develop, implement and assess particular strategies to evaluate MJTFs, especially while providing empirical evaluation results on the fundamental issue of the development, implementation and performance of MJTFs.

At a recent meeting of state criminal justice planning agencies with BJA and NIJ staff, the states described the following types of activities.

- Planning: description and/or assessment of the problem or threat to be addressed by the task force; objectives for the MJTF; establishment of a data base; description of standards used to govern program operations
- Monitoring: activities to ensure that MJTFs are operating in compliance with standards and to ensure that the MJTF is meeting its stated objectives
- Process evaluation: description of techniques, organizational structures, staffing, types of working relationships, and tactics and strategies in place to achieve objectives
- Internal or self assessment: review of what tactics and strategies were effective and why or why not
- Output evaluation: analysis of productivity related to stated objectives
- Impact evaluation: track progress towards stated objectives in order to justify continued funding; to proscribe a possible change in direction by identifying problems and solutions; and to determine the effect the MJTF has on the stated problem area. Currently some state planning agencies are using proxy measures as a means to determine impact, (e.g., citizen perception of threat; hospital admissions; citizens complaints; school suspensions for drugs; crime data; ADAM data; and price trends).

There are, however, broader research questions that need addressing and include the impacts of MJTFs on police operations generally, both units involved directly in the task force operation and other units outside of the task force operation (especially in areas

of information sharing, strategic planning, cost sharing, and coordinated prosecutions); and identification of the common characteristics shared by successful MJTFs.

B. Areas of Research

The purposes of this research are: First, develop methodologies that can be used by state planning agencies and others to evaluate Byrne funded MJTFs; second, to implement these methodologies by conducting impact evaluations of selected MJTFs to test transferability, ease of use, and general utility of the methodologies, and to provide valid data on the success of the selected sites.

Evaluation protocols should emphasize impact measures but can include methodologies to address other types of program evaluation and broader research questions described above.

Impact evaluation of MJTFs is an especially difficult task especially when applied to MJTFs that target illegal substances, the most prevalent types of MJTFs. For example, the most frequent output measured in MJTF evaluations is the volume of drugs seized. However, this measure does not reveal the impact of the such seizures. In order to determine impact one must first be able to measure the volume of drugs being imported into a jurisdiction for sale and distribution. Similarly, output measures such as the number of arrests resulting from MJTF activity is not a true measure of impact unless the total number of dealers is known. Because of the difficulties involved with measuring drug volume and transactions, State planning agencies have begun to develop “proxy” or “secondary measures,” (e.g., changes over time in the number of drug overdose cases admitted to hospitals).

Applicants should select two to four states with large numbers of MJTFs to use for the project, and provide a rationale for the selection of these research sites.

Applicants are encouraged to develop innovative measurement approaches, evaluation designs and data collection techniques, especially ones that can incorporate existing data sources.

The following are presented only as examples. Applicants are encouraged to propose other innovative

approaches to the measurement and evaluation goals. One approach might be to gather information from large numbers of MJTFs funded under Byrne State-wide strategies through State planning agencies, develop a set of evaluation measures then test them by conducting primary evaluations of a sample of MJTFs. A second approach might be to conduct case studies of MJTFs in order to develop a set of proposed measures then validate the results with a broad based survey instrument.

Tested measurement protocols and evaluation methodologies should be adaptable for use by a broad spectrum of jurisdictions and MJTFs and offered, as one of the final products of the research, to practitioners and researchers in either print or computerized format.

The research application should describe the full project with the understanding that one half, or up to \$462,100, of the project will be funded for the first 18 months. It is planned that the remainder of the project will be funded subsequently in the amount of up to \$500,000. This project is being funded in two segments primarily due to the availability of funds for this purpose. The applicant should clearly identify a reasonable demarcation line to divide the first half of the proposed project from the second half, for funding purposes. The applicant should also identify products that will be produced during the first half of the project.

II. ASSESSMENT OF TOLL-FREE INFORMATION SERVICE LINES

A. Introduction and Background

The use of mass media campaigns to promote more citizen awareness and involvement to reduce crime, violence and illicit drug use has emerged as a major component of criminal justice policy. O'Keefe and Reid (1990) found that the public is fairly attentive to Public Service Advertisements (PSAs), and people have generally favorable reactions to them.

One important set of PSAs is produced through The National Citizens' Crime Prevention Campaign (commonly referred to as the McGruff Take A Bite Out Of Crime Public Service Advertising Campaign) sponsored by the Crime Prevention Coalition of

America (121 national, federal and state organizations) managed by the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) under a grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. PSAs are educational messages designed to focus public attention on serious issues such as crime prevention. These PSAs are designed in television, radio, print, and outdoor formats by top advertising professionals and distributed around the nation to media outlets by the Advertising Council, Inc., at no charge to the community. They are designed to reach children, teens, and adults with a variety of age appropriate messages. All messages include a toll-free number.

The messages in the PSAs have been designed to be accessible to adults, teens, and in a simplified form for children so that all will obtain more information on a range of crime, violence and substance abuse prevention activities that can be undertaken at the community level. For example, the children's animated PSAs, featuring McGruff the crime dog and his nephew, Scruff, are part of a multifaceted effort to educate children in elementary grades about how to protect themselves against violence, drugs, and bullies. The adult market PSAs since 1991 have included a focus on gun-related violence and its effect on children. The objective of the gun-related violence prevention advertising is to persuade parents with children (ages 6–12) and other caretakers of youth to take action to prevent crime in their communities. The PSAs challenge viewers to become involved by calling the toll-free number to receive free information that encourages them to take specific crime prevention actions.

Since November, 1991 the 1–800–WE–PREVENT Information Line has received more than 290,000 requests for the BJA-supported booklets "Stop the Violence—Start Something," and "Making Children, Families and Communities Safer from Violence;" and as recently as January 1998 a new phase of advertising was designed entitled "Investing In Youth For A Safer Future." In addition, each phase of advertising which has been produced reflects current issues. PSAs have been localized (with local contacts for the toll-free response) for specific states and areas of the country.

In February, 1993 a survey of 524 recipients of the Booklet, “Stop the Violence, Start Something” found that eighty-five percent of the recipients reported they had a better understanding of things that could be done to prevent crime; fifty-one percent learned something new; and seventy-one percent took steps to reduce the threat to themselves and their families.

At present, the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) keeps information on the number of callers within the geographic area targeted by television public service announcements. However, no data exist on the impact of this effort on the subsequent actions of individuals and groups who obtain the Council’s materials.

The purpose of this section of the solicitation is to request applications for an impact evaluation of the Toll-free Information Service Lines; The purpose of the evaluation research is to provide additional information on the demographics of the callers, the usefulness of the call and any materials received, but most importantly what actions callers took as a result of the information provided.

B. Areas of Research Required

The primary goal of this research is to assess the impact of the Toll-free Information Service Lines follow-up component of The McGruff PSA Campaign. These Information Lines include 1-800-WE-PREVENT, 1-800-727 UNETE and 1-800-722-TEENS. The central focus is to assess utility of the Toll-free Numbers, and the effectiveness and impact of the PSAs. Among the issues to be examined in reaching this goal are: impact on citizen awareness; use of information; did citizens take action; and partnership development and community building.

Impact on Citizen Awareness

In order to assess the impact of the campaign on citizens, the applicant should determine, among other things, the level of knowledge of crime prevention as a result of PSAs. For example, how many citizens have seen the PSAs and have then followed up with a telephone call to one of the 800 numbers? For those who are familiar with the PSAs and the materials received as a result of calling an 800 number, what are

their attitudes towards this information? Did the recipients of the materials think the materials were appropriate for the intended audience?

In addition, how do calls received match up against recorded airings/printings of PSAs? Do some regions of the country respond better than others? Is the response stronger in states that have localized responders to calls?

Use of Information

Applicants should plan to measure the direct impact and effectiveness of materials received, on citizen behavior. For example, did citizens adopt new safety techniques; or did citizens begin to use local organizations or volunteer at these organizations that provide counseling, job training, guidance and other services to prevent crime, violence and drug abuse; did citizens refer the materials to someone else?

Partnership Development and Community Building

The impact of PSAs and materials received through the 800 numbers on partnership development and community building is an important impact to be measured. For example, did PSAs and the receipt of materials increase community engagement in partnership building with law enforcement agencies in order to solve crime problems or increase activities such as neighborhood watch and community patrols? In addition, did collaboration between schools and recreation departments, public agencies and community-based organizations to solve crime and crime-related problems grow in these communities?

A summary of O’Keefe and Reid study results and additional background information on the information lines are available at the Department of Justice Response Center. One award will be made for an amount up to \$312,100.

III. EVALUATING COMMUNITY-BASED DRUG TESTING PROGRAMS

A. Introduction and Background

By the end of the 1980s, drug use monitoring of offenders via toxicological analysis (i.e., drug testing through various bioassay methods, most commonly

urinalysis) by the criminal justice system had gained considerable acceptance. The development of rapid, cost-effective, and reliable drug testing methods contributed to the realization of criminal justice-based drug monitoring systems. Today, drug testing is conducted at all stages of criminal processing, from investigation and pre-trial release, through incarceration and post-custody release. Criminal justice agencies use drug testing for the purpose of forensic examination at time of arrest, for obtaining diagnostic or dispositional information needed at various points in case processing and intervention opportunities, and for compliance monitoring. For example, the practice of using drug testing to ensure abstinence as a criterion for probation eligibility has been universally adopted throughout the United States.

The FY 1997 Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Grant Program (the Byrne Program as authorized by the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988, as amended), appropriation of \$500 million included \$25 million to allow States to implement drug testing initiatives. Consequently, State and local criminal justice agencies have had the opportunity to establish drug testing programs in their communities across a range of applications for the offender population.

The purpose of this solicitation is to seek proposals to evaluate the development and implementation of innovative and comprehensive drug testing programs in criminal justice agencies, excluding those that operate solely within prisons or within drug courts.

Programs to be evaluated must be funded at least partially under the Byrne Program. Drug Court programs are not eligible for evaluation under this solicitation.

B. Areas of Research Required

1. Selection of Program(s) for Evaluation

NIJ under its partnership with BJA seeks to fund evaluations of drug testing programs that could be said to serve as “second generation” models—that is, programs intended to go beyond the typical single-agency focus of drug testing to serve as comprehensive and integrated systems of treatment

needs assessment and compliance monitoring across multiple parts of the criminal justice system.

Drug testing programs selected for evaluation should include what would be considered an innovative feature or have an innovative design with respect to their capacity for interagency coordination and information-sharing. Programs should have an information-sharing mechanism in place such as an MIS system or protocol for interagency communication of results. The research objectives should include an evaluation of the development and/or effectiveness of the innovative aspect of the program.

2. Elements of the Program to be Evaluated

The applicant may consider the following elements of a drug testing program as part of the proposed evaluation:

- ! What are the goals and underlying policy intent of the program? Are the goals and purposes of the drug testing and intervention programs clearly articulated and adhered to? How do the goals correspond to the implementation of the program?
- ! What is (are) the target population(s) for the program? How are they identified? Does the program use random or targeted testing? What are the implications and consequences of the method?
- ! Does the program include testing while in treatment?
- ! What are the testing procedures? How is the program coordinated in terms of staffing, notification to the offender that he/she will be tested, collection procedures, failure to provide a specimen, handling, storage and transfer of specimens, types of drugs screened, confirmation, retesting policy, specimen rejection, prescription medications, discarding of the samples?
- ! What are the interventions that are available? What are the criteria for referral to various

interventions, the procedures for placement, the duration of treatment?

- ! What are the sanctions that hold offenders accountable for violations of laws, institutional infractions, or conditions of release. What is the progressive order? How strictly are they enforced?
- ! What is the impact of the drug testing program? How does it affect subsequent drug use or recidivism in the treated population?

3. Types of Evaluations

Applicants are asked to propose using one or more testing programs to in their proposed evaluation. The applicant may focus on one program or propose multiple programs for comparative purposes. The evaluation could be limited to exploring and reporting on the processes of development and implementation of the program or programs; could provide an assessment of the effects on the system within which the program operates; or could focus on the impact of the testing program on individual outcomes including continued drug use and recidivism.

Up to 6 awards will be made for a total of up to \$637,600.

IV. How to Apply

Those interested in submitting proposals in response to this solicitation must complete the required application forms and submit related required documents. (See below for how to obtain application forms and guides for completing proposals.) Applicants must include the following information/forms to qualify for consideration:

- Standard Form (SF) 424—application for Federal assistance
- Assurances
- Certifications Regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (one form)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
- Budget Detail Worksheet

- Budget Narrative
- Negotiated indirect rate agreement (if appropriate)
- Names and affiliations of all key persons from applicant and subcontractor(s), advisors, consultants, and advisory board members. Include name of principal investigator, title, organizational affiliation (if any), department (if institution of higher education), address, phone, and fax
- Proposal abstract
- Table of contents
- Program narrative or technical proposal
- Privacy certificate
- Certificate of Confidentiality
- References
- Letters of cooperation from organizations collaborating in the research project
- Résumés
- Appendixes, if any (e.g., list of previous NIJ awards, their status, and products [in NIJ or other publications])

Proposal abstract. The proposal abstract, when read separately from the rest of the application, is meant to serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work. Applicants must concisely describe the research goals and objectives, research design, and methods for achieving the goals and objectives. Summaries of past accomplishments are to be avoided, and proprietary/confidential information is not to be included. Length is not to exceed 400 words. Use the following two headers:

Project Goals and Objectives:

Proposed Research Design and Methodology:

Page limit. The number of pages in the “Program Narrative” part of the proposal must not exceed 30 (double-spaced pages) for awards greater than \$50,000; for smaller awards (under \$50,000), the maximum page length is 15 (double-spaced pages). Smaller awards will be accepted **only** for the “Drug Testing Programs” portion of this solicitation.

Due date. Completed proposals **must be received** at the National Institute of Justice by the close of business on October 31, 1998. Extensions of this deadline will not be permitted.

Award period. In general, NIJ limits its grants and cooperative agreements to a maximum period of 12 or 24 months. However, longer budget periods may be considered.

Number of awards. NIJ anticipates supporting a number of grants under this solicitation. The number to be awarded is specified in each section of the solicitation.

Award amount. Each section of the solicitation has a dollar amount specified. See solicitation.

Applying. Two packets need to be obtained: (1) application forms (including a sample budget worksheet) and (2) guidelines for submitting proposals (including requirements for proposal writers and requirements for grant recipients). To receive them, applicants can:

- Access the Justice Information Center on the web:
<http://www.ncjrs.org/fedgrant.htm#NIJ>
or the NIJ web site:
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/NIJ/funding.htm>
These web sites offer the NIJ application forms and guidelines as electronic files that may be downloaded to a personal computer.
- Request hard copies of the forms and guidelines by mail from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 800-851-3420 or from the Department of Justice Response Center at 800-421-6770 (in the Washington, D.C., area, at 202-307-1480).
- Request copies by fax. Call 800-851-3420 and select option 1, then option 1 again for NIJ. Code is 1023.

Guidance and information. Applicants who wish to receive additional guidance and information may contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 800-421-6770. Center staff can provide assistance or refer applicants to an appropriate NIJ professional. Applicants may, for example, wish to discuss their prospective research topics with the NIJ professional staff.

Send completed forms to one of the evaluation topics identified below:

- I. Task Forces
 - II. Toll-free Information Service Lines
 - III. Drug Testing Programs
- National Institute of Justice
810 Seventh Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20531
[overnight courier ZIP code 20001]

For more information on the National Institute of Justice, please contact:

National Criminal Justice Reference Service

Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-851-3420
e-mail: askncjrs@ncjrs.org

You can view or obtain an electronic version of this document from the NCJRS Justice Information Center web site (<http://www.ncjrs.org>) or the NIJ web site (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>).

If you have any questions, call or e-mail NCJRS.